



Courtesy Times of India

American Jazzmen

Ravi Coltrane's visit was part of the 2005 India Jazz and Heritage Tour with other American jazz legends, vocalist Al Jarreau, guitarist Earl Klugh and bass player George Duke. The tour aimed to emphasize shared U.S.-India concerns about the spread of HIV/AIDS and other social issues and was sponsored by the U.S. State Department, Black Entertainment Television, the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz and MTV-India.

"Until eight weeks ago, I was unaware of the extent of the AIDS epidemic in India. I didn't think it was as pervasive here," said Duke, who provided backup for Jarreau as he performed for child rag pickers and street dwellers in Mumbai. The children at a shelter run by the Committed Community Development Trust laughed with delight as Jarreau sang "Ba, Ba, Bye," making the word move like a wave with crests and troughs. On the birthday of American civil rights leader Martin Luther King, Jr., the jazzmen were serenaded with the American civil rights anthem, "We Shall Overcome," sung by children supported by a nongovernmental organization called Stop Trafficking and Oppression of Women and Children. The children also performed an excerpt from Rabindranath Tagore's dance drama, *Chandalika*, depicting the trauma of a low-caste girl facing discrimination.

"Jazz was born from the American people's struggle to conquer prejudice and stigma in our society," then-Secretary of State Colin Powell said as he inaugurated the jazz tour that began in December 2004. "The struggle continues to this day....No one should be stigmatized or looked down upon." □



Courtesy BET Jazz



Combat AIDS Prejudice

Above: Al Jarreau and George Duke get into the mood at the shelter run by Committed Community Development Trust in Mumbai.

Far left: India Jazz and Heritage Tour 2005 concert at the Gateway of India in Mumbai.

Left: Earl Klugh

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